

Washington Student Achievement Council Position Description Senior Director of Research & Planning

Reports to: Executive Director
Division: Planning and Research Division
Classification: Exempt
Salary Range: \$105,000 - \$115,000
Start Date: September 3, 2014

About the Program or Division

The Planning and Research Division leads statewide and agency planning efforts and provides information and analyses that guide the Washington Student Achievement Council's efforts to represent the public interest and advance higher education attainment in the state.

In support of the mission and goals of the Washington Student Achievement Council, the Planning and Research Division endeavors to conduct innovative research and analysis of higher education issues and play a key role in formulating, implementing, and assessing progress toward State's 10-Year Roadmap and corresponding Strategic Action Plan.

How this position relates to the goals of the Washington Student Achievement Council

This position directly supports the Council's statutory mission of increasing educational attainment in Washington by providing data and policy analysis to inform higher education policy decisions and leading statewide and agency planning efforts.

About the Position:

The Senior Director for Research and Planning leads staff and external partners in the development of the State's higher education research and planning activities and the evaluation of current trends and practices in higher education. This position ensures that timely, relevant and accurate information is presented to the Council, Legislature and executive branch policymakers, thereby advancing the State's Roadmap for increasing educational attainment in Washington (<http://www.wsac.wa.gov/the-roadmap>).

The Senior Director is also responsible for serving as one of the agency's lead policy analysts; expanding cooperative research efforts; overseeing implementation, governance, and stewardship of the agency's data; and developing, coordinating, and monitoring internal and statewide planning processes. As a direct report to the agency's Executive Director and a member of the agency's Executive Leadership Team, the Senior Director is responsible for actively supporting the agency's mission, vision, values, and internal strategic plan.

Working Conditions:

This position is located in an office in Olympia. This position is exempt from civil service rules and regulations and the federal Fair Labor Standards Act. This is an exempt position that is eligible for benefits, leave, retirement, and overtime. This position works primarily in an office and has minimal exposure to risk. Occasional in-state and out-of-state travel may be required.

Essential Functions:**Strategic Direction – 45%**

- Prioritize and connect projects in ways that support long-term statewide and agency goals.
- Direct and conduct research and analysis on a broad range of higher education issues and present findings and recommendations to the Washington Student Achievement Council and interested parties.
- Lead the development and monitoring of the State's 10-Year Roadmap and corresponding Strategic Action Plan.
- Lead the development and monitoring of the agency's internal strategic plan.
- Serve as one of the agency's lead policy analysts.

Management – 45%

- Oversee the development and use of an agency-wide infrastructure to support research and analysis.
- Coordinate data-sharing agreements, policies, and procedures with education and workforce agencies, schools, colleges, universities, researchers, and others.
- Manage staff and resources in response to the growing demand for information and analysis.
- Prioritize requests to meet critical deadlines while providing accurate information and analysis.
- Co-manage with the Student Financial Assistance Division the collection, review, storage, and use of the annual student-level Unit Record Report.
- Assess employees' performance, recognize good performance, and intervene appropriately when performance is not acceptable.
- Develop and manage the division budget.

Other Duties - 10%

- Respond to inquiries from the Governor's office, Legislature, media, and others on research and planning issues.
- Track and analyze legislation that impact areas of responsibility.
- Prepare and present testimony for legislative work sessions and bill hearings.
- Other duties as assigned.

Required Qualifications:

- Master's degree in social science, public policy, education, statistics, or other related field from an accredited institution of higher education.
- A minimum of five years of experience in a senior management position with demonstrated achievements.
- Proficiency in quantitative and qualitative research methods.
- Demonstrated ability to understand and represent a statewide viewpoint while maintaining an understanding and respect for local issues.
- Strong project management experience and demonstrated success in the implementation of tactical or strategic plans.
- Ability to communicate and work effectively in a collegial and professional manner with agency staff and diverse groups of stakeholders.
- Experience preparing reports for publication and delivering professional presentations to various audiences.
- Experience conducting research and analysis that inform and support a variety of policy issues.
- Ability to excel in high-pressure, deadline-oriented environment while managing multiple projects.

Preferred Qualifications:

- Doctoral degree in social science, public policy, education, statistics, or other related field from an accredited institution of higher education.
- Experience conducting research and analysis that inform and support statewide planning.
- Experience conducting research and analysis of policy issues in higher education.
- Experience working in a highly visible, political environment.
- Working knowledge of higher education, state government, and the legislative process.
- Demonstrated ability to operate and thrive in a political environment with little explicit authority.

Application Procedures:

To be considered for this position, you must possess the required qualifications listed above and submit a complete application package, which must include the following:

1. Letter of Application. A letter of application that addresses how you meet the required and preferred education and experience described in this announcement. Applications with generic cover letters will be considered nonresponsive and may eliminate the application from further consideration.
2. Resume. A chronological resume including your educational and professional experience.
3. Two writing samples.
4. References. A list of names, titles, and current telephone numbers of three (3) employment references.
5. Authorization to Release Information form.*
6. Affirmative Action form (optional).*

*These forms can be found on our website at: <http://wsac.wa.gov/employment>

This position will remain open until filled. The Agency reserves the right to close the recruitment at any time once a qualified pool of applications is received. For best consideration, please apply by Friday, July 25, 2014.

Electronic application packages are encouraged and should be sent in MS Word format or as a PDF only with “Senior Director for Research and Planning” in the subject line. If your submission is in a PDF file format, please put the optional affirmative action form in a separate file.

Fax: (360) 704-6202 | **Email:** HumanResources@wsac.wa.gov

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Please note: The quality and completeness of the required application materials will be considered in determining whether candidates will move to the next phase of the screening process.